



# NEWCASTLE PARENT, CARER FORUM NEWSLETTER



Spring 2024

Welcome to our Spring Newcastle Parent, Carer Forum Newsletter. We will be sharing Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring editions to show what support is available in Newcastle and bust some myths.

Thank you for your feedback on the autumn edition, there's a few things we'd like to share with you in this newsletter.

Thank you to the parents who attended the coffee mornings held at Bridgewater and Hotspur Primary Schools, it was brilliant to meet you all.

- Newcastle SEND Celebration Event
- Refresh on the differences between Getting Help (SPA) and Getting More Help (CYPS)
- Autism Coffee Mornings in Newcastle
- Welcome Sessions - Introduction to support while you wait
- Newcastle's Graduated Response and SEND Descriptors of Need
- Annual Health Checks - Why do they matter?
- Access to Advocacy
- Identifying your child's health needs
- Navigating the Right to Choose
- The role of the Children and Young People's Inner West Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Day in the life of a Specialist Teacher in the Newcastle Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Service
- What Supports Effective School Transitions?



## **Newcastle SEND Celebration Events 1st June - 5th July - 2024**

We will be showcasing a programme of activities to celebrate the achievements of our children and young people in Newcastle who have a Special Educational Need and/ or Disability (SEND). These events will be happening across in City throughout June 2024. These events have been planned in partnership with schools, settings, community groups, Newcastle Parent / Carer Forum and Newcastle City Council.

The aim is to shine a well-deserved spotlight on our children and young people, their families, services, schools and settings and anyone else that makes a difference to the lived experiences of our children and young people with SEND and their families.

Look out for more details on the [Newcastle SEND Local Offer Website](#) and pass-it-on-parents soon.



The flying penguin logo for our Local Offer was designed by young people with SEND. They felt that it represents children and young people's ability to do aspirational things and, given the opportunity, reach beyond expectations.



**Question and Answer session with  
Deanne Taylor  
Head of SEND  
Newcastle Council on teams**

**Wednesday 17 April 2024  
16:30 – 17:30**

**Please contact  
[contact@newcastlepcf.co.uk](mailto:contact@newcastlepcf.co.uk) for  
Teams Link.**

## Getting Help and Getting More Help - Refresh on the difference between CYPS and SPA

**Single Point of Access** - The team responsible for looking at the referrals that are received for mental health support.

**The Getting Help Offer** - The mental health support offer for children and young people provided by organisations such as Kalmer Counselling, Streetwise and Kooth. **More info about the Getting Help providers and the support they offer can be found in our [Autumn Newsletter](#).**



Children and young people may also be offered support from the Autism Hubs and the RISE Team (mental health support team in school) as part of the Getting Help Offer.

**The Getting More Help Offer** - This is sometimes referred to as CYPS and might be required when other options have been unsuccessful.

The service is for children who have moderate to severe mental health problems. This would usually mean the child or young person's mental health is really impacting on their ability to function and/or their presentation/needs are complex and likely to require longer term **specialist** clinical intervention/support.



The neurodevelopmental pathway for children 5 years and above sits within the Getting More Help Offer. This team carry out the assessments for autism and ADHD. They do not however, provide pre and post diagnostic support (link to mythbusting) other than medication for ADHD if required.



## Autism Central Coffee Mornings

Autism Central coffee mornings are an opportunity for families and carers of autistic people to connect with each other and get advice and support from staff.

These groups are suitable for you if you have a family member who is diagnosed / going through the diagnostic process / has been identified as having need relating to autism, ADHD, sensory processing difficulties, anxiety and social communication differences.

For more information, please contact the Autism Central team on [support@daisychainproject.co.uk](mailto:support@daisychainproject.co.uk) or visit [daisychainproject.co.uk](https://daisychainproject.co.uk)

**West Walker Family Centre**  
Greenford Road,  
Walker  
NE6 3BU

9:30am - 11:30am

18th April 2024  
16th May 2024

**Fawdon Centre**  
Cairns Way  
NE3 2SN

10am - 12 noon

9th May 2024

**West End Health Resource Centre**  
Adelaide Terrace  
NE4 8BE

10am - 12 noon

2nd May 2024

**Galafield Family Hub**  
Newbiggin Lane  
NE5 1LZ

10am - 12 noon

25th April 2024  
23rd May 2024



## Accessible Newcastle

Accessible Newcastle is a Wiki (website developed collaboratively) that will tell you Newcastle's vision for an accessible city that has been based on the experiences that parent/carers and young people and staff have shared.

You can look at the Wiki [here](#)

## Myth Busting

A diagnosis is not needed for an Education, Health and Care Plan

## Welcome Sessions - An introduction to the support available in Newcastle, while you wait (no diagnosis required)

Led by the Newcastle Parent Carer Forum, events will be scheduled in the Newcastle Family Hubs for the families of children on the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) Neurodevelopmental waiting list.

In the sessions experts from across Newcastle will introduce families to all of the services available to them while they wait. **NB** all of these services are available without the need for a diagnosis and are the same services you'll be signposted to if a diagnosis is made.

There will be a market stall event where families can spend time talking to different organisations about what they do and how they can help e.g. sleep, sensory processing and toileting.

Look out on [our Facebook Page](#) and Pass it on Parents for dates in your local Family Hub!



### Myth Busting

Melatonin is not a "sleeping drug", it can only be prescribed by specialist senior doctors (not GPs) this is because it's a controlled drug. This means it's regulated because it can have powerful affects on the body.



### Myth Busting - CYPS autism pathway


Parents are often led to believe that by going through the autism diagnostic route they will get some kind of specialist care and support. **This is not true.**

CYPS is only commissioned to undertake the diagnosis of autism and they therefore provide no pre or post diagnostic support.

Support while you're waiting is available without diagnosis at the [Autism Hubs](#), see the local offer (link) and the PCF Newsletters and Facebook Page and Pass it on Parents.

## Working out the support your child needs

Determining the level of support needed for a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) involves a comprehensive assessment process. Here's a simplified explanation of how it typically works:

- **Identification and Assessment:** The first step is to identify any areas where the child may require additional support. This can involve input from parents, teachers, healthcare professionals, and assessments conducted by specialists.
- **Gathering Information:** Information is collected about the child's strengths, challenges, and specific needs in different areas such as communication, learning, behaviour, and physical health.
- **Using SEND Descriptors:** Professionals use the SEND descriptors of need to categorize and understand the child's areas of difficulty. 
- **Individualized Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP):** In some cases, particularly for children with complex needs, an EHCP is developed. This plan outlines the child's needs, the support required, and the outcomes to be achieved. It's a collaborative process involving parents, educators, and other professionals.
- **Determining Support Levels:** Based on the assessments and EHCP (if applicable), professionals determine the level of support needed. This can range from mild support within the mainstream classroom to more specialized support in a special education setting.
- **Regular Review and Adjustment:** The level of support needed may change over time as the child progresses or their needs evolve. Regular reviews are conducted to ensure that the support provided remains appropriate and effective.

## SEND Descriptors of Need

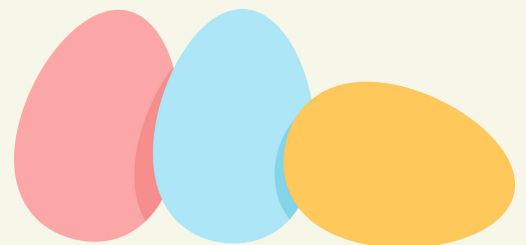
The SEND descriptors of need typically include the following areas:

**Communication and Interaction:** This refers to difficulties in understanding or using language, as well as challenges in social interaction and communication skills.

**Cognition and Learning:** This includes difficulties with understanding information, learning new skills, and completing tasks, which may affect academic progress.

**Social, Emotional, and Mental Health:** This covers emotional well-being, behaviour, and mental health concerns that may impact a child's ability to engage in learning and social interactions.

**Sensory and/or Physical Needs:** These are related to difficulties with vision, hearing, or physical mobility, which may require additional support or accommodations.



## Annual Health Checks - Why do they matter?

Anyone aged 14 or over who is on their doctor's learning disability register can have a free health check once a year. These checks are really important as people with a learning disability can sometimes have poorer physical and mental health and this doesn't need to be the case.

### What's the GP Learning Disability Register?

The learning disability register is a list of all the people with a learning disability that a GP practice looks after.

This list means the doctors can make sure people get the right support when visiting.

You do not need a diagnosis to be included on the register and you might use different words to describe your needs, for example: learning difficulty.

A specific code is added to your medical report which means you can receive extra support.

**Mencap have some great resources including easy read guides to your annual health check and videos of people talking about their health check experiences.**

View their page [here](#).

### What happens during an annual health check?

A doctor or nurse may check:

- Things about your body, like your heart and breathing.
- Weight and height.
- Blood pressure.
- Blood and wee.
- Ears and eyes.



They may also ask about how you are feeling, foods you eat and any medicines you're taking.

### Is my child on the learning disability register?

As a parent or family member, you can contact the GP surgery and ask them to check if the person you support is on the learning disability register.

You may have to book and attend an appointment with them, which is a great opportunity to ask about reasonable adjustments that would help your child access health services more easily.

**Annual health checks are also offered to anyone over 14 with a Severe Mental Illness.**

## Lego clubs in Newcastle

Libraries in Newcastle are hosting free Lego clubs for children and young people. There's no need to book in advance and all materials are provided.

Suitable for ages 4+, children must be supervised by a parent or carer.

**Gosforth Library** - Every Tuesday , 3.30pm -4.30pm

**Fenham Library** - Every Friday, 3.30pm -4.30pm

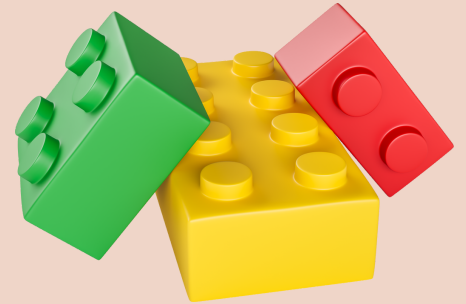
**Newburn Library** - Every Saturday, 10.30am-12.30pm

**High Heaton Library** - Every Saturday, 11am-12pm

**Outer West Library** - Every Saturday, 11am-1pm

**Denton Burn Library** - Every Saturday, 12pm -1pm

**Kenton Library** - First Thursday of the month, 3.30pm -5pm



## Newcastle SEND Portal and FAQs

The SEND portal is a secure website used by Newcastle Council's SEND Support Assessment and Review (SAR) team to gather key information around Education Health and Care plans.



You can look through the FAQs about the portal and watch the step-by-step guide for parents/carers about how to sign up and submit a request for an Education Health and Care plan assessment through the portal on the Local Offer, [here](#).

## Competition time - Name Newcastle's flying penguin - Chance to win £100 gift vouchers!



We are running a competition for our children and young people to select the name for our penguin. If your child/young person would like to enter please complete the entry form on [this link](#) or use our QR code.

The winner will:

•Be selected by Newcastle's parent/carers forum and our SEND Voice trainees.



•Receive a certificate and a £100 gift voucher of their choice.

•Be invited to take part in a film which will be shown as part of the finale of the celebration events in June.

Competition closes 10th May 2024.



## Access to Advocacy

Statutory advocacy is all commissioned by the Local Authority.

The ICB don't commission any advocacy directly for children and young people. However they do contribute to SEND Voice Lead, who engages with children and young people.

The Integrated Care Board commission with Connected Voice, a local organisation to provide a range of advocacy support for adults with health and social care needs. If you:

- Are ethnically minoritised.
- Have mental health needs.
- Have a learning disability.
- Have a physical or sensory impairment.
- Are over 55 years old.
- Are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender.

And need some support with:

- Getting the health and social care services you need
- Having your views and wishes heard
- Understanding your rights
- Finding information
- Dealing with letters and phone calls
- Preparing for meetings
- Keeping safe from abuse

### Contact Connected Voice

One Strawberry Lane  
Newcastle Upon Tyne  
NE1 4BX

Tel: 01912327445

E mail: [connected@connectedvoice.org.uk](mailto:connected@connectedvoice.org.uk)



## Identifying your child's health needs on an Education Health and Care Plan

When you apply for an Education, Health and Care Plan there is a health questionnaire that must be completed by you.

We ask for information on your child's health and if they're getting help from any health services.

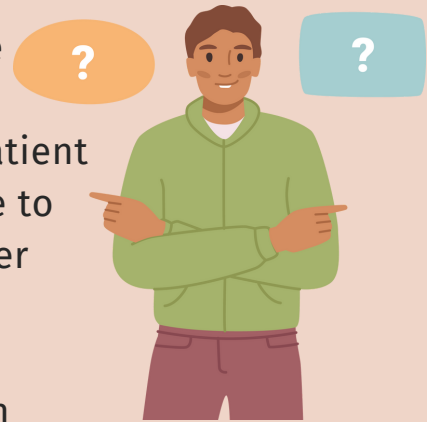
It's really important to understand if your child has any health needs that impact on their education e.g. any conditions or disabilities that might make it harder for your child to learn.

If you need any help or have any questions when completing the form you can e-mail [nencicb-ng.ehcphealthadvicencwc@nhs.net](mailto:nencicb-ng.ehcphealthadvicencwc@nhs.net)

## Navigating the Right to Choose

NHS policy that gives people the right to choose a healthcare providers, that best meets their needs for certain types of services.

The Right to Choose (RTC) provider **MUST** have an NHS contract in place that specifically relates to the services being sought by the patient e.g. if the RTC provider has a contract for face to face autism assessments, it can then only offer that under right to choose.



North East North Cumbria ICB is developing an accreditation framework for providers which will eventually mean there is a list of right to choose providers.

If diagnosed and a course of treatment recommended then the Right To Choose provider will titrate (find out what medicine works best) and then will seek to have a shared care agreement with your GP to continue with medicine prescriptions.

If you choose a private provider then you will be expected to pay for your child's medication.

### **Fact - Melatonin**

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Foundation Trust (CYPS) will only prescribe Melatonin when a child is open to active therapy on the mental health or learning disabilities pathway and it's deemed necessary by clinicians.

CYPS will not accept any referrals for sleep issues alone.

### **Fact - Melatonin**

The Great North Children's Hospital paediatric department will only prescribe Melatonin if they have made a diagnosis e.g. Autism and deem it necessary for the child.

They will not prescribe if any other NHS or private provider has made the diagnosis.

## Tai Mitchell - The role of the Children and Young People's Inner West Clinical Nurse Specialist

### What is your role?

I am a clinical nurse specialist, and i work in the Inner-West Primary Care Network in Newcastle. I see children and young people from the age of 5-18 with a variety of mental health, and neurodevelopmental difficulties.

My role has a variety of aspects, but centres around timely assessment and formulation for children and young people.

Following assessment and formulation, we can explore multiple different treatment options, but this can vary from short-term intervention from myself, signposting. or a further referral to additional services.

### How do you help?

My role is around making sure that children and young people with mental health and neurodevelopmental difficulties are seen timely, and are offered appropriate and effective assessment to ascertain what difficulties they are experiencing, and then ensure that they receive the appropriate support.

### What does the average day look like for you?

I offer face-to-face appointments as well as telephone appointments and I can see children and young people for a variety of different topics.

**A health care professional, like your GP can refer you for support from Tai.**



### Update - Shared Care

The ICB is working with Newcastle GP Practices to resolve current issues being faced by parents around **shared care**.

Once new arrangements are in place, updates will be shared on the PCF and Pass it on Parents Facebook pages.

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## **The Haven - Halewood Avenue, Kenton, NE3 3RX**

The Haven is part of Children and Families Newcastle's network of Family Hubs. Refurbished in 2023 it is a warm and welcoming space.

There are activities for families from 0-19 years including: play and holiday activities; youth club sessions; pre-school activities; pregnancy and baby socials; health visitor clinics.

There is also more specialist support e.g. Citizens Advice Service, parenting groups and advice; support where children aren't attending school; well-being support and access to work.

All sessions are SEN inclusive and we encourage parents to talk to us about the nature of different groups (i.e. boisterous/quiet/ busy/ supportive) to ensure the best fit for you and your child.

Across our wider network of hubs we also have Autism hubs and SEND parents group.



**Our main number for centres in the north is 0191 211 5773**  
**Or find us on Facebook [Children and Families Newcastle, North | Newcastle upon Tyne | Facebook](#)**

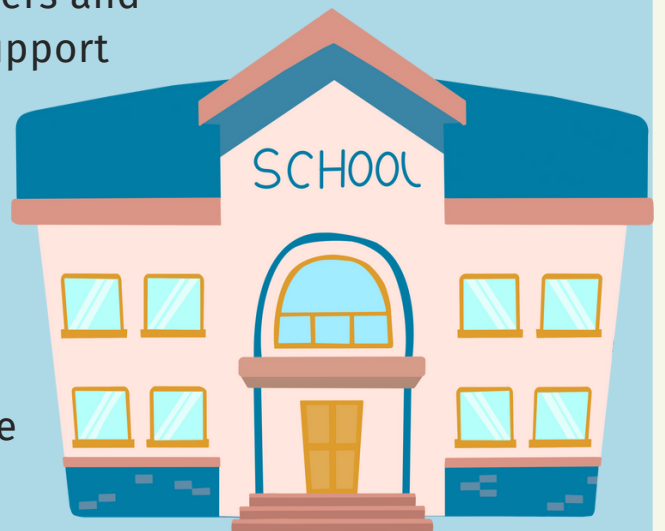


## **Day in the life of a Specialist Teacher in the Newcastle Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Service**

I work for the SEMH service in Newcastle; we provide practical support, training and guidance to primary schools to meet social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

Our aim is to improve the coping and resilience of our young people. The team is made up of specialist teachers and inclusion support workers. The team support schools in a variety of ways - we can deliver bespoke training and support for the whole staff, respond to needs of staff through 1:1 work this does not necessarily just mean teaching staff.

I work in the east locality, which is made up of 17 schools which I have regular contact with. I generally, have a very varied week which is made up of visits to the schools, project work, creating resources and training for school.



An average day for me may include two or three school visits. The school visits can consist of classroom observations, training for staff, meeting with senior leaders to support the whole school SEMH provision. Some of the visits may include meetings with parents as well as working with other agencies supporting the school. This also involves attending team around the school meetings where schools and specialist services come together to share support and good practise.

## Mental health support for under 5s

Getting Help and Getting More help offers support for children under 5 years old, however the majority of the support that families might require will be best provided by the 0-19 Health Visiting and Early Help services.

The health visiting service and early help are well placed to support with behavioural difficulties, sleep and weaning issues, routines and adjusting to new parenthood and difficulties with parenting toddlers. They may also be able to identify early parent infant relationship difficulties and be able to signpost to more specialist support.



The Parent Infant Relationship service Little Minds in Mind operates as part of the therapeutic services offer within Children North East and works with infants and their parents from conception to age two, where there are identified issues in the relationship between infant and carer/parent. This service can offer practical support and psychoeducation about infant mental health as well as Video Interactive Guidance and Parent Infant psychotherapy where the infants mental health and secure emotional development may be at risk. This is part of the Children and Families Hubs offer in Newcastle.

Getting Help is a mental health service working with children aged 0 – 18. Within this team child psychotherapists and other clinicians, are well placed to offer support to this age group and their carers where mental health difficulties may arise as a result of early trauma. Children of this age need to meet the criteria for acceptance into the children and young people's service including demonstrating symptoms of moderate to severe mental health problems.

Getting Help will only accept referrals where tier one support has already been provided e.g. 0-19 health visiting, early help.